

Proposing a New Foundation of Attack Trees in Monoidal Categories

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Abstract. TODO

1 Introduction

What do propositional logic, multisets, directed acyclic graphs, source sink graphs, Petri nets, and Markov processes all have in common? They are all mathematical models of attack trees [?], but even more than that, they can all be modeled in some form of a symmetric monoidal category¹ [?] – for the definition of a symmetric monoidal category see Appendix A. Taking things a little bit further, monoidal categories have a tight correspondence with linear logic through the beautiful Curry-Howard-Lambek correspondence [?]. This correspondence states that objects of a monoidal category correspond to the formulas of linear logic and the morphisms correspond to proofs of valid sequents of the logic. I propose that attack trees – in many different flavors – be modeled as objects in monoidal categories, and hence, as formulas of linear logic.

The Curry-Howard-Lambek correspondence is a three way relationship:

Categories	\iff	Logic	\iff	Functional Programming
Objects	\iff	Formulas	\iff	Types
Morphisms	\iff	Proofs	\iff	Programs

By modeling attack trees in monoidal categories we obtain a sound mathematical model, a logic for reasoning about attack trees, and the means of constructing a functional programming language for defining attack trees (as types), and constructing semantically valid transformations (as programs) of attack trees.

Linear logic was first proposed by Girard [?] and was quickly realized to be a theory of resources. In linear logic, every hypothesis must be used exactly once. Thus, formulas like $A \otimes A$ and A are not logically equivalent – here \otimes is linear conjunction. This resource perspective of linear logic has been very fruitful in computer science. It has lead to linear logic as being a logical foundation of concurrency [?] where formulas may be considered as processes. This perspective fits modeling attack trees perfectly, because they essentially correspond to concurrent processes.

¹ We provide a proof that the category of source sink graphs is monoidal in Appendix B.

Girard’s genius behind linear logic was that he isolated the structural rules – weakening and contraction – by treating them as an effect and putting them inside a comonad called the of-course exponential denoted $!A$. In fact, $!A \otimes !A$ is logically equivalent to $!A$, and thus, by staying in the comonad we become propositional. This implies that a modal of attack trees in linear logic also provides a model of attack trees in propositional logic, and a combination of the two. It is possible to have the best of both worlds.

In this short paper I introduce a newly funded research project² investigating founding attack trees in monoidal categories, and through the Curry-Howard-Lambek correspondence deriving a new domain-specific functional programming language called Lina for Linear Threat Analysis. We begin by defining the style of attack trees we will study here in Section 2, then we give a semantics of attack trees in a model of full intuitionistic linear logic in Section 3, we discuss how the semantics may be further abstracted in Section 4, and finally, we discuss the design of Lina in Section 5.

2 Attack Trees

3 Concrete Semantics of Attack Trees in Dialectica Spaces

4 Abstract Semantics of Attack Trees in Monoidal Categories

5 Lina: A Domain Specific PL for Threat Analysis

6 Conclusion and Future Work

References

A Symmetric Monoidal Categories

B Source Sink Graphs are Symmetric Monoidal

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